



Cornell University Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, January 28, 2016 Meeting

4:45pm-6:30pm in Willard Straight Hall Memorial Room

I. Call to Order (J. Batista)

- J. Batista called the meeting to order at 4:48pm
- *Present at the Roll Call:* B. Bacharach [2.5]; J. Batista [1]; M. Chak [3]; S. Chadhaury [2.5]; J. Chessin [0.5]; V. Devatha [3.5]; R. Dunbar [2.5]; M. Ghandour [4.5]; R. Gupta [2.5]; E. Johnston [1]; S. Karnavat [4]; M. Kasher [0]; G. Kaufman [0]; C. Li [3.5]; D. Li [4.5]; D. Liu [0.5]; M. McBride [0]; V. Michel [2]; P. Russell [0.5]; J. Selig [2.5]; M. Stefanko [5]; K. Zhu [3]
- *Not Present at the Roll Call:* L. Bushner (Unexcused) [5]; E. Liu (Resigned); S. Tayal (Excused) [3.5]; P. Titcomb (Resigned); R. Uttamchandani (Unexcused) [5.5]

II. Forum on the Proposed College of Business

- Nico recommended the Board of Trustees delay the decision of the Proposed College of Business, as he wanted an opportunity for students to be involved. With alumni donations funding a major part of the Hotel School, he was also afraid of future lost revenue and was ultimately against the proposal.
- Colton Haney stated the timing of the decision was poorly executed. He saw this as a way to help the reputation of AEM and the Johnson School at the cost of the Hotel School.
- B. Bacharach stated that the fact that the Faculty and many Alumni want this decision tabled speaks to the proposals merit.
- G. Kaufman stated that at the Faculty Senate meeting they reached out to at least 14 Trustees with hopes of tabling the process until more could be discussed.
- Casey was in favor of the new College. With neither the Johnson school nor the Dyson School disappearing, she listed several opportunities and benefits. The school would have leverage while competing with other top schools for students. She believed there was an opportunity to create a next generation business school.
- Davana Bolten a senior in the Hotel School worried that specialty classes, resources, and projects would be lost with the loss of the Hotel School's specific business program. She pointed out that Hotel School alumni traditionally hire graduates from the Hotel School, and a new school, she believed, would dilute alumni relations. She additionally feared fewer applications because of a broadening program.
- M. Stefanko stated that the Administration could have done a better job of sharing information. He believed endowment was lower at Cornell than other peer institutions because of the narrow fields, and lack of a central university. He wanted to bring back the decision to a discussion and address the concerns of those who are giving up resources for the successful creation of the new college.
- M. Ghandour stated that seeing the whole picture instead of just having a new college

proposed, would help everyone think about the costs and benefits. Adding to this, she believed each Cornellian should know enough about the proposal to be able to think about long-term implications.

- Kelly McDarby, a transfer from the Dyson School to the Hotel School, saw the Hotel Program as a robust and very specific program. She believed Cornell's Hotel School operated in a decentralized manner, and the programs strengths could be diluted by the creation of a centralized business program.
- A community member was in favor of the change. She saw the creation of a central business school, as opposed to the three separate schools focused on business as a better proposition. She believed if the proposal passed, Cornell would be set to become one of the largest business schools.
- M. Battaglia stated the lack of time allocated for discussion or community feedback was the main reason for his dissent in the proposal. He believed having this new college sprung on Cornell students, Alumni, and the Board of Trustees was not an appropriate way to make decisions.
- M. Chak stated that when she applied to Cornell she had trouble making the decision about which Cornell school would fit best because of the separate school's business programs. She saw the new creation of a central business school as beneficial to undecided students applying to a business related field.
- Nelson Billington '19 brought to the attention of the Assembly that the Dean of the Hotel School: Dean Johnson, is leaving this year, and the search for a new Dean had been tabled until the Trustees come to a decision on the new College of Business.
- Kendall '16 stated that as an ILR student she worried the creation of a Business School would rebrand an ILR degree negatively. She believed the College of Business would make ILR students look more like social policy or pre-law students, and would hurt ILR students applying to jobs in business.
- D. Li stated that having spent the summer at University of Pennsylvania she saw that their single Business school, Wharton, made the campus more polarized. D. Li did not want Cornell to become separated by specific colleges to that extent, and wanted the proposal tabled, because there was not enough known.
- Brandon Greer '16 believed the decision to consolidate schools was proposed because of Cornell's financial and management goals. He believed the approach was fairly sensible and saw the decision as a choice that would provide Cornell with the ability to focus resources and compete with other peer institutions.
- G. Kaufman motioned that the Student Assembly declare the following recommendation: "The Student Assembly recommends that the Board of Trustees table the proposal for the College of Business to allow for more time for community feedback."
- By a vote of 20-2-3, with two community votes in the affirmative, the Student Assembly **approved** the recommendation.

III. Announcements and Reports

- Extended Dining Hours at RPCC – V. Devatha announced that one of the biggest concerns of the freshman class was extending the dining hours at RPCC and Appel. After discussion amongst the Dining Committee and meeting with the Director of Dining, dining hours were extended to 9:00pm Monday-Thursday.
- Faculty Senate, University Assembly, Committee on Academic Programs and Policies, PCOC – G. Kaufman stated that during the Faculty Senate's December meeting they

unanimously voted to table the College of Business. The University Assembly also voted to table the proposal. He proclaimed that President Garrett acknowledged UA Resolution 3, which would reassign all single person bathrooms to now be designated as open to all sexes. G. Kaufman additionally announced that the Committee on Academic Programs and Policies did not have any oversight in the creation of the new College, and lastly that the Provost College Oversight Committee would be asking each college dean to reduce overlap in course offerings.

- Elections Update – E. Johnston stated that with two new vacated Student Assembly seats M. Henderson, Director of Elections, would tentatively be running an election in early February for these positions.
- Outreach Requirements – M. Chak reminded each representative of outreach goals and requirements.

IV. Business of the Day

- There was a motion to move Resolution 34 to the top of the agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.
- Resolution 34: Updating the Student Assembly Standing Rules
 - E. Johnston and J. Berger stated that there were collectively proposed changes made to the Standing Rules over the winter break. The biggest changes would create new attendance policies to reform unavoidable absences. The Oath of Office was also added to remind representatives of their duties. *Initiatives* would be a new feature of the Assembly, as a way to give feedback and publicize actions that would not require a formal resolution. Finally the amended changes would hold Appropriations Committee members to stricter voting guidelines, in order to avoid conflicts of interest.
 - M. Battaglia was concerned about the proposed attendance policy, and disagreed with the new reasons for pardoning Student Assembly member's absences. He believed the attendance policy was already forgiving, and additional leniency would only create worse representation.
 - M Stefanko stated that as a senior, he wanted greater leniency for reasons like job interviews. He believed it would hurt the Student Assembly to continue forcing those looking for jobs, especially seniors with experience on the Assembly, to take an absence every time an interview conflicted with an Assembly meeting.
 - J. Breuer requested that the Assembly maintain the status quo in regards to attendance policy.
 - G. Kaufman stated the people who lose the most due to absences are representative's constituents. He welcomed an amendment to strike the section.
 - E. Johnston stated that having seats absence is the biggest disruptor to the Assembly, and the proposed changes would solve this issue.
 - J. Chessin requested to know the number of representatives who in the past had been kicked off of the Assembly.

- J. Battista requested J. Chessin reach out to Corey Earle, the Assembly's Executive Archivist.
 - There was a motion to amend the proposed Standing Rules to strike § 2 Rule 5, 6, and 7, strike "additionally", and reinstate "academic conflict".
 - B. Bacharach asserted that having senior members kicked off the Assembly would negatively affect the remainder of the Assembly's term.
 - S. Karnavat stated that his absences from last semester were mainly from academic field trips. He believed that it was the role of the Assembly to make exceptions for reasons such as these.
 - M. Stefanko expressed disapproval with the current system, exclaiming that it promoted representatives who lacked initiative and were not willing to go out into the community, but instead attend weekly meetings. M. Stefanko declared that he would be missing a meeting later in the semester to discuss the implementation of Cornell's grocery store system, and felt it counterintuitive to expel him from the Assembly for such action.
 - D. Li stated that the addition of this amendment would help representatives who are attempting to stay involved in the community and balance academics.
 - By a vote of 2-16-0 the amendment **failed**.
 - There was a motion to amend line 12 to include "Be it further resolved the attendance amendment policy will be implemented for the 2016-2017 academic year as proposed in § 2 Rules 5, 6, and 7."
 - M. Kasher suggested the addition of a policy that would give representatives only three, two, or even one unexcused absence.
 - J. Berger stated that this was part of the sponsor's larger goal, but currently members would be expelled if such legislation passed. She believed that this type of proposal would best be implemented at the beginning of the Assembly's 2016-2017 term.
 - J. Berger clarified that the attendance policy would not be retroactive (in the fact that absences could not be removed from a record), but rather a new policy would begin right away.
 - D. Li agreed with this amendment believing that it was likely representatives would miss future meetings, and it should not be the fault of exams or other such conflicts for the dismissal of an Assembly member.
 - By unanimous consent the motion to hold a roll call vote was adopted.
 - The Resolution was **amended** by the Assembly a vote of 13-6-0.
- B. Bacharach, No; M. Chak, Yes; J. Chessin, Yes; V. Devatha, Yes; M. Ghandour, No; R. Gupta, No; E. Johnston, Yes; S. Karnavat, No; M. Kasher, Yes; G. Kaufman, Yes; C. Li, Yes; D. Li, No; M. McBride, Yes; V. Michel, No; P. Russell, Yes; J. Selig, Yes; M. Stefanko, Yes; K. Zhu, Yes
- There was a motion to table.
 - By a vote of 11-5-0 Resolution 34 was **tabled**.

J. Battista adjourned the meeting at 6:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter F. Biedenweg

Assembly Clerk, Office of the Assemblies